

James Monroe to Thomas Jefferson, February 15, 1789, from Thomas Jefferson and James Monroe Correspondence, Transcribed and Edited by Gerard W. Gawalt, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

James Monroe to Thomas Jefferson

Fredericksbg. Feby. 15. 1789.

Dear Sir

Your favor of the 9th of August last has been recd. before this I doubt not mine of a date subsequent to those you acknowledge has reach'd you. It gave you a detail of the proceedings of the convention of this state. Since which the eleven that have adopted the govt., under the act of Congress that was necessary to put them in motion, have taken the necessary measures for its organization; except New York whose operations have been retarded, by some misunderstanding between the senate & the other branch of the government. This obstacle will however I doubt not be remov'd since I have reason to believe, it has on neither side any other object in view than some arrangement suited to the prejudices of the pre-existing parties of that state. The publick papers say it respects the mode of appointing Representatives.

The letter from the Convention of the State was suppos'd to have suggested the mode of obtaining amendments that would be most likely to succeed. After all the preparatory arrangments

were carried for organizing the government, it was taken up here and approv'd. In consequence whereof an application was made to the Congress of the new government to

Library of Congress

be presented when conven'd, to call a convention for that purpose. The weight of business that would devolve on the government itself

if not other consideration might occur was suppos'd a sufficient reason why this trust shod. be repos'd in another body. It cod. in no event be productive of harm for the discussion of subjects however important by the deliberative bodies of America, create little heat or animosity except with the parties on the theatre. The draft was revis'd and corrected by *Bland* and partakes of his usual fire and elegance.

This Commonwealth was divided in to 10 districts from each of which a member was to be placed in the House of Representatives. A competition took place in many, and in this, consisting of Albemarle, Amherst, Fluvanna Goochland Louisa Spotsylva. Orange and Culpeper, between Mr. Madison and myself. He prevail'd by a majority of about 300. It wod. have given me concern to have excluded him, but those to whom my conduct in public life had been acceptable, press'd me to come forward in this govt. on its commencement, and that I might not loose an opportunity of contributing my feeble efforts, in forwarding an amendment of its defects nor shrink from the station those who confided in wod. wish to place me, I yielded. As I had no private object to gratify so a failure has given me no private concern.

It has always been my wish to acquire property near Monticello. I have lately accomplish'd it by the pur

chase of Colo. G. Nicholas improvements in Charlotte ville and 500 acres of land within a mile, on the road to the R. fish gap. To those of Gilmour he has added others of Stoner of considerable value so as to have expended in that line £2200. The land is tolerably good and great part in wood. I give him in western property to be valued as such property wod. sell upon two years credit £2500 and if I dislike the valuation I may retain the land and pay the money at the expiration of 6 years with interest. Whether to move up immediately or hereafter when I shall be so happy as to have you as a neighbour I have not determin'd..

Library of Congress

In any event it puts it within my reach to be contiguous to you when the fatigue of publick life, shod. dispose you for retirement and in the interim will enable me in respect to your affairs, as I shall be frequently at Charlotte ville as a summer retreat, and in attendance on the district court there, to render you some service. You will I doubt not command me with that freedom the pleasure I shall have in executing your desires will authorize. Peter Carr was with me a few days since, he came from Wmsbburg. For his health, having been indisposed with the ague and fever,& has found the trip of service. I think him well inform'd & a promising young man. Mr. Short has entirely forgotten me. I have heard of his intention to return this year and hope he will not disappoint the wishes of his

friends in that respect. I hope you enjoy your health, and that your daughters are favor'd with same blessing. I have latterly heard nothing of Mr. Mazzai. I fear the want of punctuality in my correspondence has lessen'd me in his esteem a circumstance I shod. much lament as I respect him for his virtues & talents. Commend me to them all and be assur'd of the sincerity with which I am your affectionate friend and servant, Jas. Monroe

RC (Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress).